APPEAL NO. 020268
FILED MARCH 21, 2002

This appeal arises pursuant to the Texas Workers' Compensation Act, TEX. LAB. CODE ANN. § 401.001 *et seq.* (1989 Act). A contested case hearing was held on January 10, 2002. The hearing officer held that the respondent's (claimant) bilateral carpal tunnel syndrome (BCTS) resulted from her motor vehicle accident (MVA) injury of _____. The appellant (self-insured) appeals and argues that there is no evidence to show the connection between her BCTS and the MVA. There is no response from the claimant.

DECISION

We affirm the hearing officer's decision.

The claimant was driving a bus for the self-insured at the time she was injured in a collision with another vehicle. Initially, upper extremity pain and numbness were attributed to a herniated cervical disc.; however, these symptoms persisted past cervical surgery in late 1999. Testing in February 2001 determined that the claimant had BCTS and there is medical evidence in the record attributing this back to the MVA. The undisputed injuries involved a concussion and cervical and lumbar injuries (the latter included radiation of symptoms into the lower extremities).

The hearing officer did not err in determining that the claimant's BCTS was the result of her _____, MVA. We would caution that while chronology alone does not establish a causal connection between an accident and a later-diagnosed injury (Texas Workers' Compensation Commission Appeal No. 94231, decided April 8, 1994), neither does a delayed manifestation nor the failure to immediately mention an injury to a health care provider necessarily rule out a connection. *See* Texas Employers Insurance Company v. Stephenson, 496 S.W.2d 184 (Tex. Civ. App.-Amarillo 1973, no writ). Generally, lay testimony establishing a sequence of events which provides a strong, logically traceable connection between the event and the condition is sufficient proof of causation. Morgan v. Compugraphic Corp., 675 S.W.2d 729, 733 (Tex. 1984). The site of the trauma and its immediate effects are not necessarily determinative of the nature and extent of the compensable injury, and the full consequences of the original injury, together with the effects of its treatment, upon the health and body of the worker are to be considered. Western Casualty and Surety Company v. Gonzales, 518 S.W.2d 524 (Tex. 1975).

The medical evidence and mechanism of injury amply support the hearing officer's decision. The hearing officer is the sole judge of the relevance, materiality, weight, and credibility of the evidence presented at the hearing. Section 410.165(a). The decision should not be set aside because different inferences and conclusions may be drawn upon review, even when the record contains evidence that would lend itself to different inferences. Garza v. Commercial Insurance Company of Newark, New Jersey, 508

S.W.2d 701 (Tex. Civ. App.-Amarillo 1974, no writ). In considering all the evidence in the record, we cannot agree that the findings of the hearing officer are so against the great weight and preponderance of the evidence as to be manifestly wrong and unjust. In re King's Estate, 150 Tex. 662, 244 S.W.2d 660 (1951). We affirm the decision and order.

The true corporate name of the insurance carrier is **(a self-insured governmental entity)** and the name and address of its registered agent for service of process is

DR. CT
(ADDRESS)
(CITY), TEXAS (ZIP CODE).

Susan M. Kelley
Appeals Judge

CONCUR:

Chris Cowan
Appeals Judge

Michael B. McShane
Appeals Judge